



**Testimony from the Connecticut Association for Institutional Research  
In Support of Senate Bill No. 237,  
An Act Concerning the Sharing of Information Between the  
Labor Department and Institutions of Higher Education**

February 27, 2012

Dear Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee:

We are writing to you in support of Senate Bill No. 237. As professional institutional researchers and officers of the Connecticut Association for Institutional Research, one of our aims is to help colleges and universities in the State of Connecticut to be more responsive to various constituencies. Three main groups who will be interested in the information resulting from improved data-sharing between the Connecticut Department of Labor and institutions of higher education are prospective students and their families, employers in the region, and college faculty and administrators charged with educating students and preparing them to become productive members of society.

When thinking about where to attend college, families often want to know how helpful a degree will be in securing employment upon graduation. This is a justified concern, particularly given the ever-increasing costs of higher education. In addition to mandating that institutions of higher education provide right-to-know data regarding student demographics, retention rates, and graduation rates, the reauthorized Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 also requires the provision of information about the employment of graduates from degree and certificate programs. Many institutions attempt to gather employment data from alumni, but the information acquired is often incomplete due to low response rates. Passage of the bill under consideration would greatly improve the ability of Connecticut colleges and universities to provide information regarding the employment of graduates that is much more complete, valid, and reliable than information drawn from alumni surveys.

Beyond the micro-level decision-making processes families go through to decide where to send children to college are macro-level concerns pertaining to workforce development and the economy. As the State works to develop a more competitive business environment and businesses seek to hire employees, they must enter into conversation with Connecticut's two-year and four-year public and private institutions that center around the relationship between economic and workforce needs and how college programs can be refined to better align with strategic initiatives in different sectors of the economy. For such discussions to be truly productive, it is crucial that they be informed by rich, meaningful data. The proposed bill will help facilitate those much-needed discussions.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to speak in favor of Senate Bill No. 237.

Sincerely,  
Paul Carmichael, ConnAIR President  
Kathy Chung, ConnAIR Vice President  
Michael Broderick, ConnAIR Secretary/Treasurer